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THE NEW RÉGIME IN CHINA

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The real, purposeful preparation for a constitutional form of government in China, which forms the main theme of this paper, may be said to date only from 1908, but the need of a constitution had begun to be felt a few years before. Still older are those minor political reforms which were not at first consciously designed to pave the way for a constitutional régime, but which have had that practical effect to no small degree. A brief survey of the history of the gradual adoption of these reforms and of the rise of constitutional ideas in China may give one an insight into the character of her new régime and into some of the circumstances which must react upon its future.

Such a survey might well begin with the close of the war with Japan in 1894-1895, for, at length, the results of this war brought home to a few Chinese the urgent need of political reforms. Had not the reverses China suffered been inflicted by a little neighbor whom she had for more than fifteen centuries considered a pupil of her civilization, but who appeared, to China's great disgust, to have deserted the traditional kinship of East Asiatic culture, and adopted with slavish eagerness those occidental methods and institutions which China despised? The war was, in a sense, a struggle between the old and the new methods of political conduct. Did not China's defeat demonstrate the wisdom of Japan's course, and indicate that China should also revise her old policies, if she would maintain the dignity of a sovereign state? Such were the thoughts of a few patriotic Chinese of the period. Henceforth the close relation between the living example set by Japan and the reform movement in China should not be lost sight of by the student of the latter.

An Imperial decree of 1895 stated that the government should adjust itself to the conditions of the times, particularly at this critical period, and urged that all high officials present plans of changes which they might consider necessary for the recovery of national honor.¹ The many memorials called forth by this edict showed, how-

¹ *Tō-Aō Dō-bun Kwai hō-koku* for April, 1909, p. 3.

ever, still how undeveloped were political ideas of their writers, and how slowly they would advance in the path of reform. Nearly all discussed in eager but vague terms the need of financial and military reforms, but few ventured to suggest more fundamental changes or presented details of practical reforms. Only the reformatory measures proposed by K'ang Yu-wei² included, among other things, the promulgation of a constitution.³ The idea, however, was couched in very general phrases, and otherwise would, in any form, have been too far in advance of the time to be practicable. The late Chang Chī-tung vigorously attacked the proposition, saying that, if the right of political discussion were granted to the people before they were sufficiently educated, "there would result not one good but a hundred evil effects," and stigmatized the idea as provocative of insurrection.⁴ It is well known that even less radical measures advanced by K'ang and approved by the late emperor resulted, in 1898, in their utter failure and in calling forth a strong reactionary party in power at the court.

The anti-foreign uprising of 1900 was a direct result of the reactionary movement thus begun in 1898, but the humiliating lesson given by the powers during the Boxer war served to awaken even the conservative court to the wisdom of adopting at least a few measures of elementary reform. Again an imperial edict, issued early in 1901, ordered high officials to recommend to the throne plans for necessary changes.⁵ The papers presented in response to the edict included the famous three memorials written jointly by the late viceroys Liu Kun-i and Chang Chī-tung,⁶ and the one by Governor Yüan Shī-k'ai.⁷

The language of these memorials was perhaps even more impassioned than that of the memorials of 1895-8, and several contained simple suggestions of practical procedure. Few, however, dared to go beyond the limit of advocating the adoption of military, official, educational and economic methods of the more progressive nations. Even

² The transliteration of Chinese sounds in this paper follows the Hirth system as outlined in the *Syllabary of Chinese Sounds* (by Prof. Friedrich Hirth), in the *Carnegie Institution of Washington publication* No. 54, *Research in China*, vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 511-528.

³ *Tō-A*, etc., April, 1909, pp. 5-6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, May, 1909, p. 15.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-14.

⁶ *Kei-zai se-kai*, extra No. 3, 1902, pp. 1-123.

⁷ *Tō-A*, etc., April, 1909, pp. 5-6.

of these inchoate propositions, none but two reformatory measures were actually executed by the court. First, the official system required certain changes: a new board of foreign affairs (*Wai-wu pu*) was, at the request of the Powers, organized in 1901, and superseded the old Tsung-li ya-môn; in 1903, a new commercial board (*Shang-wu pu*) was made; and, before these two boards, a new office was established, in 1901, called *Hui-i Chōng-wu ch'u*, bureau for the discussion of political affairs, composed of half a dozen grand councillors and secretaries and of the viceroys Chang and Liu, for the purpose of considering the opinions regarding political reforms advanced by officials and of making the bureau's own recommendations to the throne.⁸ This last office served in subsequent years as an entering wedge for the constitutional movement, which gradually found its advocates among the more liberal memorialists. Second, it was believed urgent to establish a system of national education based partly on modern learning. The ethical teachings of Confucianism were to continue as the foundation of national education, but the material side of Chinese culture was henceforth to be supplied by the scientific knowledge of the Occident.⁹ The commissionership of education was created in 1902; a comprehensive scheme of public schools of all grades¹⁰ was promulgated in 1903; but it was not until 1906 that a full board of education was organized, and the antiquated system of examination based upon Confucian learning was abolished.¹¹ It should be noted that, neither in these initial reforms nor in the opinions submitted by higher officials, there was yet to be found any serious attempt to establish a constitutional form of government. Nor should it be forgotten that, up to 1908, it was provincial governments, notably those of the viceroyalty of Ch'i-li under Yüan Shih-k'ai and that of Hu-nan and Hu-pe under the late Chang Chi-tung, rather than

⁸ *Tō-A*, etc., May, 1909, pp. 7-14; January, 1904, p. 64; etc.

⁹ *Waseda gaku-hō*, March 1, 1905, pp. 9-20. *Tō-A*, etc., September, 1905, p. 1 ff.; December, p. 23; May, 1909, pp. 12-13, 20; November, 13-34. This last reference contains an explanation as to why there was so much less resistance than had been expected of the old scholars to the new educational system. Also, *ibid.*, December, 15-44.

¹⁰ This scheme of school-system was largely adopted from the Japanese, but, in some instances, the Chinese system gives more hours per week and longer courses of study than the Japanese. It is needless to say that the system has not yet been completely put into practice, schools of the lowest and highest grades particularly being still very deficient.

¹¹ *Waseda gaku-hō*, March 1, 1905, pp. 9-20. *Tō-A*, etc., September, 1905, p. 1 ff., December, p. 23; May, 1909, pp. 12-13, 20; November, 13-34. Also, *Ibid.*, December, 15-44.

the central government at Peking, that led in the practical work of political reforms. This was inevitable from the important fact that, under an efficient governor, the provincial government could possess a relatively greater unity of control and greater financial resources than the still half-awakened, disunited, and impecunious central government at Peking.

Then came the convincing lesson of the Russo-Japanese war. The fact that the rival powers had been brought to an armed conflict on China's territory because of her very impotency aroused some of her people to a lively appreciation of the necessity of guarding her own sovereign rights with adequate strength. Moreover, the question as to how to strengthen herself seemed again to have found a ready solution in the case of the victorious neighbor, Japan. If the small Japan was able to become a fully sovereign state, there was little reason why China with her larger natural resources could not grow to be a greater power. But where was the secret of the success of Japan and other active nations, asked the thinking Chinese, and they arrived at the unanimous conclusion that the secret was in their constitutional régime that interested all classes of the people in their national affairs. These ideas are reiterated with remarkable simplicity of faith in nearly all the memorials and edicts regarding the establishment of a constitutional government that have appeared in China since the Russo-Japanese war.¹² Whatever one's opinion may be as to the truth and wisdom of these ideas as applied to China, he may justly regard them as a long step in advance of the vague and hesitant ideas of reform that were presented after the Boxer war.

¹² "The reason that other nations are rich and strong is: that by governing by constitutions and deciding by public discussion, they acquaint all the people with their financial and political conditions, so that the higher and lower classes share the same life and the officials and people act as one body. We, also, shall promulgate a constitution, uniting the sovereign rights in the hands of the emperor and deciding all affairs of government by public opinion, and shall thereby establish an eternal foundation of the state."—An imperial edict 7th month, 13th day (lunar calendar), 1906. *Tō-A*, etc., May, 1909, p. 19.

"At this critical time, the existence of the empire may be maintained only by the common effort of the government and the people, . . . national progress may be stimulated and national efficiency secured only by the diligence and mutual correction of the officials and commoners . . ." From an imperial edict August 27, 1908, granting outlines of the constitution, etc., to be promulgated nine years hence. *Ibid.*, September, 1908, p. 1.

For similar expressions in memorials and edicts, see *ibid.*, July, 1904, p. 40; October, 1904. pp. 20-25; July 1907, p. 32; etc.

At first, however the court was, as it still seems to be, encumbered by a large number of conservative spirits who, some from conviction and others from a sense of personal or class interest,¹³ obliged the government to advance with faltering steps. It was not until the latter part of 1905, when the more progressive officials had presented urgent memorials and when popular clamor for a new régime had run high, that the Manchu court at last showed a disposition to investigate the possibility of installing a new order. It appointed special commissioners to visit the principal constitutional governments of the West and of Japan, and study their systems;¹⁴ and, further, intimated in an order to the provincial governors that, while in Russia a constitution was forced by the people from the emperor, in China it would be granted by the throne.¹⁵ In August, 1906 an edict proclaimed: "A constitution will be promulgated, uniting the sovereign rights in the hands of the emperor, but allowing all affairs of government to be decided by public opinion, and thereby an eternal foundation of the state will be established."¹⁶ This was followed by the edict of July 8, 1907, saying, "a constitutional régime consists in a harmonious coöperation with disinterestedness and public spirit by all classes of the nation in all parts of the empire."¹⁷ New commissioners were sent to Japan, England, and Germany, three constitutional monarchies, to study their institutions.

Simultaneously with these indefinite promises of a constitution, and as the first step of preparation for its granting, the government made, in 1906 and 1907¹⁸, important though still inadequate changes in the official organization of the central and provincial administration. As these changes will continue in force for some time to come, and will have a large bearing on the success of the new régime, it is well to recall the nature of some of them.

It will be remembered that the official system under the old régime possessed many features which, however interesting in their historic development,¹⁹ and however useful in the past, would seri-

¹³ *Ibid.*, July, 1904, p. 40; March, 1905, pp. 57-58; etc.

¹⁴ Their departure was delayed by an accident that occurred at the Peking depot. They were away from China during the first half of 1906.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, May, 1907, p. 17.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, August, 1907, p. 27; February 15, 1910, p. 21.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, July, 1907, p. 83; August, 1907, p. 24 ff.; May, 1909, p. 20; June, 1909, pp. 30-41

¹⁹ A highly satisfactory account of the historical development of the more

ously interfere with a reasonable conduct of affairs of a modern state. To enumerate only some of the more remarkable of these features. Both in the central and in the local government, the same officials often took part in two or all of the time-honored three functions of the Chinese high official,—namely, deliberative, executive, and censorial,—so that their duties ran into one another, and caused, not only confusion, but also a general lack of initiative and shirking of responsibility. In fact, many of the various offices in Peking and in the provinces being historic growths independent of one another in origin, and interests and traditions having grown about each of them during the long ages of its existence, these offices neither were properly coördinated nor could be reorganized without causing serious friction. A confusion of judicial and executive functions, together with the absence of a prosecuting machinery, characterized the lower grades of the provincial officialdom; and everywhere prevailed an ambiguous distinction between the execution of law and the administration of justice, and between police and military functions. The system of balancing with each other Manchu and Chinese officials by placing them in equal numbers in each important office in Peking had resulted in its multiple headship and often in the mutual jealousy and suspicion among the officials of the two races. Perhaps the most serious of all, there being no central office like the modern cabinet under an official control of a prime minister, but, on the contrary, all the chiefs of the boards and all the viceroys and governors of the provinces being in direct communication with the throne, there was always a lamentable lack of unity of control and of flexibility of action, whenever the sovereign was weak, and a continual danger of lapsing into despotism under a wilful emperor.

The new official organization for the central government made in 1906 introduced many improvements, including the abolition of the system of balancing Manchu and Chinese officials, giving to each board one chief and two assistant chiefs,²⁰ instead of two chiefs and four assistants, as heretofore; a remodelling of the boards of war, of justice, and of rites;²¹ the amalgamation of the boards of commerce

important offices of the Chinese Empire has been published by Dr. Unokichi Hattori, in his valuable *Shin-koku tsü-kō*, vols. 1 and 2, Tokyo, 1905. Cf. in Pang-p'ing's article in *Waseda gaku-hō* or August, 1903.

²⁰ This change had been made in one or two boards a few years before, but was now made universal.

²¹ It is impossible in this limited space to describe the character of the remodelling of these boards now at last effected. Mayers' work, referred to below,

and of public works into one board; and the creation of the board of communications. It should be noted, however, that the ill-defined and confusing functions of the majority of offices remained unaltered, and a plan to introduce a cabinet system was defeated.²² There still are, therefore, all in direct relation to the emperor, the grand council (*Kün-ki ch'u*), the secretariat (*Nei ko*), the bureau for the discussion of political affairs (*Hui-i Chōng-wu ch'u*), the office for compiling the constitution (*Hién-chōng pién-ch'a kuan*), the office for revision of laws (*Siu ting fa-lü kuan*), and the boards, now numbering eleven—of foreign affairs (*Wai-wu pu*), of officials (*Li pu*), of civil administration (*Mín-chōng pu*) of finance (*Tu-ch'i pu*), of rites (*Li pu*), of education (*Hio pu*), of army (*Lu-kün pu*), of justice (*Fa pu*), of agriculture, manufacture and commerce (*Nung-kung-shang pu*), of communications (*Yu-ch'uan pu*), and of the dependencies (*Li-fan pu*),—besides some other offices which have comparatively little relation to the new régime.²³

As regards the provincial government, it is enough to remark that the new system relating to its official organization, which was provided in 1907, while it advised, among other things, the establishment of local courts of justice, thus aiming at the separation of the judicial from executive business, contemplated no change in the status of the viceroy or governor. He still, on the one hand, is directly responsible to the throne, and, on the other, exercises enormous powers, civil, military, and diplomatic. It will be seen later that the new régime is apt to bring about important changes in these respects.

It will now be observed that up to the end of 1907 the government had promised a constitutional reform only in general terms, and appeared to have been guided by no definite plan of practical prepara-

has been a useful guide to students of the Chinese government under the old régime; it will before many years become necessary to have as valuable a compendium of the official organization of the new régime.

²² *Tō-A.*, etc., March, 1909, pp. 12-13.

²³ Of these, may be mentioned the department of the imperial household (*Tsung-jan fu*), the college of literature (*Han-lín yüan*), the bureau of taxation (*Shui-wu ch'u*), the military council (*Kün-tz'i ch'u*), the court of revision (*Ta-li yüan*), and the censorate (*Tu-ch'a yüan*). The Han-lín yüan has recently been slightly reorganized. See *Tō-A.*, etc., December, 1909, p. 53.

The offices of the old régime are explained in W. F. Mayers' *The Chinese Government: a Manual of Chinese Titles*, etc., Shanghai, 1878, part ii. Also see H. S. Morse, *The Trade and Administration of the Chinese Empire*, New York, etc., 1908, pp. 53-59.

tion, but to have been impelled by the growing public demand for a new régime to move along with uncertain steps. This state of things was due largely to the lack of unity, lack of strength and financial resources, and lack of experience in such affairs, that characterized the Peking government. It was probably in order to remedy this situation that the viceroys Chang Chī-tung and Yuan Shī-k'ai—two local magnates who had been carrying out reformatory measures in their respective provinces with much greater wisdom and facility than the central authorities—were, on September 4, 1907, relieved of their provincial posts, and appointed grand councillors to the throne. Prince Shun, now the prince regent, had also just taken the same office. The year 1908 dawned with much brighter prospects for reform than any previous year, and, with the support of the new councillors, steps were taken which at once secured the certainty of the new régime and determined its larger aspects. Then occurred, on November 14 and 15 of that year, the successive demise of the Emperor Kwang-sü (posthumous title: Tō-tsung King-huang-ti) and the empress dowager, followed, on January 2, 1909, by the dismissal of Yuan Shī-k'ai, on October 4, by the death of Chang Chī-tung, and, in December, by the abrupt downfall of the progressive Viceroy Tuan Fang.²⁴ These unfortunate events have not, however, seriously interfered with the progress of the new régime, which, having already acquired a sufficient momentum, and under the intelligent leadership of the young regent, has been making its way against great odds. Let us now describe those specific measures of reform which have been taken since the auspicious year 1908.

On August 27, 1908, general outlines of the new constitution and of the laws of the national diet and of election to be promulgated nine years hence were published,²⁵ together with a tentative program of preparatory reforms to be undertaken year after year during the intervening period. This programme has since been extended,²⁶ so that in its present form it comprises all phases of the political life of the nation.

The published outlines of the constitution include, among other things, the following fundamental features. The constitution is

²⁴ It being beyond the purpose of this paper to discuss the practical politics of the court of Peking, we refrain from making extended references to the more important personages in the Chinese government. For the probable reasons for the downfall of Tuan Fang, see *Tō-A*, etc., January 15, 1910, pp. 36 ff.

²⁵ *Tō-A*, etc., September, 1908, pp. 1-10.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-16; October, 1908, p. 53; July 1909, p. 15 ff.; August, 1909, p. 18 ff.; October, 1909, p. 53 ff.

to be granted by the emperor. He is sacred and inviolable, and his successors should for eternity follow the same line of descent. In him are vested all the sovereign rights of the state, but he graciously creates organs to assist him in the exercise of some of these rights. The constitution, however, and the laws of the imperial household, will be framed without the assistance of the diet. The emperor convokes, opens, closes, suspends, and dissolves the diet, presents bills to it, and sanctions and promulgates laws passed by it; he determines the organization and the salaries of the officials, and appoints and dismisses the same; he determines the organization of the army and navy, and has supreme command of them; he declares war, makes peace, concludes treaties, and exchanges envoys with other nations; he proclaims the law of siege, and, at critical times, restricts the freedom of the subjects by means of imperial rescripts; he confers marks of honor, and grants pardon; he has the judicature, and charges the courts of law to exercise it in accordance with law, which courts shall not be changed by imperial ordinances; he issues or causes to be issued ordinances, but the latter shall not alter or abrogate laws; in case of emergency, and if the diet is not in session, he issues imperial ordinances in the place of law, and takes the necessary financial measures by means of an imperial ordinance, but the matter shall be submitted to the diet at its next session. The Chinese subjects, according to qualifications determined by laws and ordinances, may be appointed to civil and military offices, and be elected members in representative assemblies; and within limits prescribed by law, enjoy liberty of speech, writing, publication, public meetings, and associations; right of demanding justice from judges, and of being tried at courts of law; and inviolability of their property and residence. The subjects shall not be arrested, detained, or punished, unless according to law. They are obliged to observe laws, to pay taxes, and to render military service.

It will be seen at a glance that all these clauses relative to the emperor and subjects of China contained in the provisional constitution have been adopted, almost word for word, from the Japanese constitution promulgated twenty years ago.

According to the outlines of the law of the national diet, the latter will consist of two houses; it will possess, to use the euphemistic expression of the original document, "the right of proposition, but no duty of execution;" its decisions may,—the text does not say, should,—with imperial sanction, be executed by the government. The annual budgets, as well as all the new laws—though this latter point is not

stated, and is only inferred from other sources—will require the consent of the diet. The diet may also discuss questions proposed by its members which concern the interest of the whole empire, but not provincial or local questions. If a high official of the government acted in violation of law, the diet might submit to the emperor the proof thereof, and impeach the offender,—a clause which does not find its parallel in the Japanese constitution,²⁷—but the diet should not interfere with the imperial authority to appoint and dismiss all officials.

The published outlines of the law of election are very meagre, and do not indicate either the qualification for the voter and for the candidate, the division of electoral districts, or the method of election.

The nine-year programme of preparation for the full establishment of a constitutional government is comprehensive, but, in many details, still tentative. A few important steps may be briefly summarized. The general programme begins with the thirty-fourth year of Kwang-sü and ends with the eighth year of Süan-tung, or, roughly speaking, from 1908 to 1916.²⁸ (1) The population of the empire will be examined, according to the new law²⁹ published in the first year, and will be finally reported in the fifth year; in the meantime, a new law of census will be framed in the third year, and put in force in the sixth. (2) In relation to education, schools of lower grades will be extensively established, and text-books compiled, so that in the ninth year the ratio of the illiterate to the general population will have been reduced to 95 per cent.³⁰ (3) Laws of self-government for the smaller local divisions will be published in the first and second years, (the first set of these laws, granting self-government to the smallest local divisions, has, as will be seen later, since been issued), and be gradually put into practice before the seventh year is over. (4) Police duties, which have hitherto been partly performed by the village, will be put into the hands of specially constituted authorities to be fully organized by the eighth year.

²⁷ The Japanese constitution provides that the houses of the diet may present addresses to the emperor, but it has no special clauses for the impeachment of cabinet ministers. The right of addressing the throne may perhaps be used for that purpose.

²⁸ The first day of the Chinese lunar year falls somewhere between January 21 and February 19 of the Gregorian calendar.

²⁹ Promulgated January 1, 1909. See *Tō-A*, etc., February, 1909, p. 41 ff.; April, p. 56.

³⁰ A real university and a peers' school, among other things, are also contemplated.

(5) As regards the department of justice, a new penal law will be in force in the sixth, and new civil and commercial laws and law of procedure, in the eighth year;³¹ while law courts of all grades will be gradually established between the second and the eighth year.³² These measures are designed, it is needless to say, not only to insure an efficient administration of justice to the Chinese citizens, but also to throw off the yoke of the extra-territorial jurisdiction of foreign nations in China. (6) A law of civil service will be made and enforced between the second and fourth year, and a new official system for the central and provincial government will be framed and tested, and finally adopted in the ninth year. One may be sure that a large part of the destiny of the new régime will depend upon this revised system, whatever it may be. (7) Regarding finance, a law of reorganizing provincial and national finances will be promulgated in the first year, (this law has been published);³³ provincial revenues and expenditures examined during the second and third years, provincial budgets and reports for each past year begun in the third, and a law of local taxation published in the fourth. Likewise, national accounts and national taxation will have been fully systematized by the ninth year, and a bureau of audit established in the eighth. A gold monetary standard will be gradually introduced and completely established in ten years.³⁴ (8) A system of conscription will probably be adopted, and a large army, with the appertaining military institutions, will be gradually built up; a rehabilitation of naval strength is planned; and the emperor will assume supreme command³⁵ over the army and navy. (9) The legal distinction that has existed between the Manchu and Chinese population and has been a cause of antipathy between the two races, will be obliterated by giving adequate means of livelihood

³¹ See Li Kia-kü's views on the codes to be framed, *Tō-A*, etc., October, 1909, pp. 60-61.

³² The establishment of law courts has thus far been one of the least encouraging features of the new régime. Except two or three, most of the provinces have shown lack of both zeal and men in this most important work.

³³ On January 11, 1909. See *Tō-A*., etc., February, pp. 33-40.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, October, 1908, p. 41; January 15, 1910, p. 22.

³⁵ That the emperor of Japan takes the supreme command of her army and navy, though he naturally does not personally see the detail of their management, contributes powerfully to the unity and strength of her military forces. It is not strange that China has adopted the same idea. Cf. Ta Shōu's memorial, *Tō-A*, etc., October, 1908, p. 35. The practical difficulty of this measure in China, where the most efficient armies have for many years been provincial armies, will be considerable.

to the Manchu Bannermen and their families, perhaps numbering two million souls, and, by the eighth year, completely incorporating them in the census on the same footing as the Chinese. It has already been shown that the old system of maintaining an equal number of Manchu and Chinese chief officials at each central board is no longer in force. It is evident that the imperial house has determined to depend upon the loyalty of the entire nation, rather than, as has obtained hitherto at least in theory, governing the conquered race under the military control of the conquering tribes whom the former were obliged to support.³⁶ (10) It is well known that it is planned that the importation of opium and the cultivation of the poppy will be completely stopped before 1917.³⁷ (11) The provincial assemblies will be organized in the second year and be henceforth annually convoked. (The first annual sessions were concluded between November 24 and December 2, 1909.) (12) The provincial parliament will be elected in the second year, and convened annually from the third. (13) Finally the laws of the imperial household, the constitution, and the laws of the diet and of election, will be promulgated, and the first general election for the diet will take place, in the ninth year, namely, in 1916. The year 1917 will witness the first session of the new diet.

In looking over this comprehensive scheme of preparation, one would wonder how the Chinese government intends to meet the enormous expenditures that the vast work must necessarily involve. The central and provincial governments already bear foreign loans amounting nearly to seven hundred million dollars gold³⁸ while the total recorded revenue of the empire hardly exceeds one hundred million

³⁶ See *ibid.*, August, 1907, p. 29; August, 1908, pp. 18, 50; September, pp. 10-15; December, p. 48; March, 1909, pp. 41, 66. It could not be expected that the abolition of the distinction of legal status between the two races would also do away with the sentimental difference between them. A keen rivalry prevails at this moment between Manchu and Chinese politicians in Peking, and it constitutes one of the deterrent features of practical politics militating against the success of the new régime.

³⁷ This measure has thus far been perhaps the most enthusiastically executed and most promising of success of all the proposed measures of reform. *Ibid.*, September, 1908, p. 52; February, p. 70; April, pp. 52, 56, etc.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, August, 1909, pp. 5-8; January 15, 1910, pp. 32-36. At the end of 1908, the aggregate of the financial obligations of China to foreigners was as follows: 15 loans relating to the Japanese and Boxer wars, £115,353,590; 12 loans relating to railways, £18,100,000; 3 other loans, £5,103,489; total, £138,557,079, or 923,713,860 taels. Of this sum, about 700,000,000 taels, involving interest charges of about 30,000,000 taels, were owed by the central govern-

taels, or, at the average rate of exchange in 1908, sixty-five million dollars. The indemnities and loan charges consume fully 40 per cent of this sum.³⁹ The cessation of the importation of opium will deprive the government of an annual income of twenty million taels, which is the present revenue from the import duty levied on this article,⁴⁰ and the possible abolition of the *likin* will further cripple the provincial finances, while the increased price of salt recently made will be far from supplying the deficiency caused by the loss of the opium duty. The stamp tax⁴¹ introduced in 1909 is exceedingly unpopular, and has been opposed by fifteen of the twenty-one provincial assemblies whose first session has just closed. Many of the provincial governments, including some of the richest, are already in serious financial embarrassment;⁴² and the conditions of the central government, which, while largely depending upon the support of the provinces, is itself obliged to support some of them, are alarming. It is true that when the present national and provincial finances, which are in a chaotic state of confusion, are reorganized in accordance with the published plans,⁴³ there would be discovered means of better government economy. It is well known, however, that the execution of this plan is beset with enormous difficulties, and its results thus far have been of the most discouraging character.⁴⁴ A memorial recently presented to the

ment. There are some other provincial loans not included in the above aggregate.

³⁹ *Koku-min shin-bun*, December 25, 1909.

⁴⁰ *Tō-A*, etc., November 1909, p. 76.

⁴¹ It was provided that all transactions in property should require stamps at the following rates: For property under 1000 taels of market value, a stamp of 0.02 tael; for property under 10,000 taels of market value, a stamp of 0.10 tael; and for property above 10,000 taels of market value, a stamp of 1.00 tael. A stamp of one tael was required in registering each case of the inheritance of properties. *Ibid.*, July, 1908, pp. 23-24; January 15, 1910, pp. 22, 36, 45.

⁴² Thus far the financial reports rendered by the provinces show deficits in nearly all cases. *Ibid.*, January 15, 1910, p. 52.

⁴³ For this plan, see *ibid.*, February, 1909, pp. 33-40; January 15, 1910, pp. 22-44.

⁴⁴ For example, the financial reports of the provinces for 1909 are said to contain many discrepancies from their normal accounts expected from the provinces, owing in some instances to the authorities who have made questionable uses of public funds. The financial commissioner of Kansu failed to make any report, and has been dismissed from the office. In the Peking government, there is as yet no central exchequer, each board having barely succeeded in consolidating its own accounts.

throne by the board of finance contained the following statement: "If the normal process of adjusting expense to income should be discarded, but if the new notion that the income should be planned according to expenses should prevail, and all the works of the new régime be begun at the same time, each office acting according to its own ideas with little regard to the financial resources of the country, we fear that the treasury would be depleted before the nine-year preparation was completed, and the future of the constitutional government would be jeopardized."⁴⁵ It is, moreover, likely that, as soon as financial questions appear in the new representative assemblies, there would arise bitter struggles between the governor and the people, as well as between the provinces and the Peking government. The most important consideration is, of course, that the new expenditures incident upon reformatory measures will continue to increase on a large scale. The necessary undertakings of reform could hardly be attempted without recourse to foreign capital, while every additional foreign loan would bring China nearer bankruptcy and foreign interference with her finances in the most serious form. It is not too much to say that the Chinese empire is building between two fires, namely, between, on the one hand, the old habit of corruption and inertia, eking out a half-independent existence among the mutually jealous powers, and, on the other, a career of reform securing national strength but involving a probable loss, at least temporarily, of financial autonomy. The latter is perhaps the lesser evil, but the vast majority of the influential population of China would be strongly opposed to the outcome, and are already alarmed at its probability.^{45a} Nor is it

⁴⁵ *Tō-A*, etc., November, 1909, p. 76.

^{45a} The critical condition of the finances has at last aroused some Chinese to action. A rumor was current in China a few months ago that the Powers would discuss at the Hague the desirability of instituting an international commission to take over the management of the Chinese government finances. The negotiations then going on regarding further immense loans for China for the building of new railways and for the "neutralization" of some old ones, and the published interview of Secretary Knox explaining the motive of the American government in this movement, tended strongly to confirm the ominous rumor just referred to. Many patriotic Chinese in Tientsin then conceived the heroic idea of preventing the crisis that seemed so imminent by freeing the government from financial obligations incident upon the Chinese-Japanese and Boxer wars, amounting probably to seven hundred million taels, by means of voluntary contributions made by all the people in the country. The provinces were appealed to, and all have responded with

evident that the authorities of China are determined, either to avert the crisis by effective measures, or to brave the temporary humiliation abroad and violent opposition at home for the sake of ultimate good.

To return to the actual work of reform, among the practical steps that have been taken since the beginning of the period of nine years of preparation, should be noted the promulgation, on January 18, 1909, of the laws granting self-government to the smaller local divisions,⁴⁶ and, on July 22, 1908, of the laws creating the provincial assemblies⁴⁷ and, on September 21 and October 26, 1909, of those regarding the provisional parliament.⁴⁸

Local self-government is defined in the first article of the law of January 18, 1909,⁴⁹ as the management, under the supervision of local officials, and with a view to supplementing the administrative work of the latter, of local affairs of public interest by members elected in the locality. It is emphasized that self-government is not independent of, but supplementary to, official administration, and that it is to be carried on under official supervision. All domiciled male citizens over twenty-five years of age paying more than two *yuan* (silver dollars) of taxes, excepting the illiterate, opium smokers, public officials and a few other classes of unqualified men⁵⁰, have the right to elect and be elected members of the local assembly. The assembly, called *I-shī hui*, consists of from twenty to sixty members, according to the population of the community, one half of the members, being elected by the richer citizens who together pay 50 per cent of the taxes returned from the

wonderful readiness. Correlated associations have been organized to persuade *all* the citizens in the twenty-two provinces, high and low, young and old, to contribute to the general fund according to a definite system. Whether this colossal movement will succeed will be observed with lively interest by all friends of China. *Tō-A* etc., January 30, 1910, pp. 26-30.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, April, 1909, pp. 8-46.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, August, 1908, pp. 16-44.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, August, 1908, pp. 13-15; September, 1909, pp. 41-46; November, 1909, pp. 49-61.

⁴⁹ This law applies to the smaller local districts called *ch'ōng*, *chōn*, and *hiang*,—the *ch'ōng* being the seat of the government of the larger divisions, *fut'ing*, *chōu*, and *hién*, and *chōn* being now defined as a community with more than 50,000 inhabitants, and the *hiang*, with less. The law of self-government for the *t'ing*, *chōu*, and *hién*, will soon be promulgated.

⁵⁰ Soldiers, policemen, religious teachers, and students.

community.⁵¹ The members receive no compensation.⁵² The assembly meets four times each year regularly for fifteen days in each session. It discusses, usually in an open session, affairs relating to education, public health, public works, agriculture, commerce, and industry, care of the dependent, and the like; frames minor rules of self-government for the community; and oversees the finances necessary to the conduct of these affairs.⁵³ It also hears and composes differences among the people which relate to the entire community.⁵⁴ The assembly elects, by a single ballot, from among the entire body of the eligible men of the commune, a small executive council, called *Tung-chi hui*, in case of a commune with a population of more than 50,000, or a local chief (*Hiang-tso*) and his assistant (*Hiang-tung*), in case of a smaller community,⁵⁵ the term of office being two years both for the assembly members and for the executive. When the assembly and the executive disagree about local affairs, an appeal may be made to the assembly of the next larger local division, thence, if necessary, to higher local officials, and thence again to the provincial assembly.⁵⁶

It is often said that the Chinese nation has for ages been accustomed to village self-government, and the imperial edict granting the new law emphasizes this point. While this is a fortunate fact for the political life of the local district, it should also be remembered that the new system of self-government is different from the old⁵⁷ in several important respects. The new system makes a much more distinct division of work between the official and the popular share of local administration. It also creates a regular deliberative organ, which the old system possessed, if at all, in an inchoate and indefinite form,

⁵¹ These provisions closely resemble those in the law of the *shi, chō, and son*, of Japan, of 1888, amended in 1889, 1898, and 1900. *Gen-kō hō-rei shu-ran*, compiled by the Bureau of Records of the Cabinet, Japan, 1907, vol. 1, part 5, pp. 29-76.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ The Japanese law provides for a further appeal to the court of administrative law or to the minister of home affairs. *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ By the old system are meant the historic institutions of *pau* and *kia* (groups of houses and families for mutual protection and exhortation), *hiang-chōng* and *tsu-chōng* (respectively, village and clan heads), *hiang-yo* (rules for the moral conduct of the villagers), etc.

and, even in the executive business, an element of regular discussion is now introduced in the larger communities. The range of the business of the self-government itself has also been radically changed, police and semi-moral functions of the old village-heads being now either transferred to other hands or withdrawn, and new functions relating to education, public health, public works, and industry, being added. It is likely that a successful operation of the new system will require a kind of men and kind of training largely different from those that controlled the old.⁵⁸

The provincial assembly, or *Tz-ikü* in Chinese, contains from thirty to one hundred and forty members⁵⁹ elected for three years, by a system of double election, from among the male citizens over thirty years old. The voters at the first election, should be male citizens over twenty-five years of age, who have either been in public service for more than three years or in official position, or received secondary education or literary degrees, or who hold in the province property or capital of more than 5000 *yüan* in value.⁶⁰ As in the case of the local

⁵⁸ *Tö-A*, etc., June, 1909, pp. 23-25.

⁵⁹ Pending the taking of an accurate census, the school statistics and the returns of the rice-tax to Peking from the province are made the basis for the assigning the number of members to its assembly. The following are the numbers thus assigned: Ch'i-li, 140; Kiang-ning, 55; Kiang-su, 66; An-hui, 83; Hu-pe, 80; Hu-nan, 82; Shan-tung, 100; Ho-nan, 96; Shan-si, 86; Shen-si, 63; Kan-su, 43; Sin-kiang, 30; Szü-ch'uan, 105; Kwang-tung, 91; Kwang-si, 57; Yun-nan, 68; Kui-chóu, 39; Föng-t'ien, 50; Ki-lin, 30; and Héi-lung-kiang, 30.

⁶⁰ According to the information already received, the ratios between the total population and the primary voters, and between the latter and the assembly members, are as follows:

	POPULATION	PRIMARY VOTERS	VOTERS PER 1000 POPULA- TION	MEMBERS	VOTERS FOR EACH MEMBER
Ch'i-li.....	20,937,000	160,000	76.41	140	1,142
Föng-t'ien.....	5,500,000	52,670	95.76	50	1,534
Hei-lung-kiang.....	1,500,000	4,446	29.64	30	148
Kiang-su.....	13,980,000	59,600	43.57	66	903
An-hui.....	23,670,000	77,902	32.57	83	938
Kwang-tung.....	31,865,251	141,000	43.9	91	150

The great disparity of the ratios in the different provinces are noticeable. *Tö-A*, etc., November, 1909, pp. 75-76.

self-government assemblies, the following have no right to elect or be elected members of the provincial assembly: the disorderly and quarrelsome, the bankrupt, the demented, the illiterate, the opium smokers, the actors and bond-servants, and those who have been punished for crimes; and the following are suspended their franchise: the officials and their private secretaries serving in the province, soldiers, police officials, religious teachers, students and teachers in primary schools. The elected members receive no compensation, except their traveling expenses. The assembly meets annually from the first day of the ninth month to the eleventh day of the tenth month (of the lunar calendar). It discusses, in a usually open session, financial matters, legal changes, as well as new undertakings or reforms, all relating to the province. It considers propositions and petitions from the people, hears disputes in self-governing bodies, and answers questions asked by the governor. It also elects from among its own members its share in the half of the members of the provisional parliament who are returnable from the provincial assemblies. The assembly may interpellate provincial authorities on matters of administration, though the latter might decline to respond, if the question required secrecy. The assembly may impeach to the governor a public official engaged in corrupt practices or violation of law.⁶¹ The governor may, for specific reasons⁶² defined in the law, suspend the sessions for a period less than a week, and, with imperial sanction obtained from the provisional parliament, dissolve the assembly.

A comparison of these provisions regarding the qualifications of the candidate and of the voter with the corresponding provisions in the Japanese law (of 1899) in relation to the city (*Fu*) or prefectural (*Ken*) assembly is instructive. Japan requires a property qualification of the voter—three *yen* or more of direct national tax, and a higher one of the candidates—ten *yen* or more, while in the Chinese law, the qualification for the voter is varied in a most interesting manner, and the candidate needs no property qualification. See *Gen-kō* etc. vol. 1, pt. 5, pp. 1-10.

⁶¹ These provisions are absent in the Japanese law.

⁶² Occasions for suspensions are: when the assembly has acted beyond its rights and did not heed the admonition of the governor, when its resolution is in violation of law, and when its conduct is disorderly beyond the control of its president. The following constitute reasons for dissolution: when the resolution of the assembly implies disrespect to the emperor, when it jeopardizes the peace of the state, when the assembly does not obey an order for suspension or does not change its attitude after repeated suspensions, and when the majority of the members do not respond to repeated orders of convocation.

These specifications do not obtain in the Japanese law.

The resolutions of the assembly should be executed by the governor, but if the two should fail to agree in this respect, the assembly should refer the question to the provisional parliament.⁶³ It may also refer to the same body any act of transgression committed by the governor against the rights of the assembly or against law, as also a dispute between the province and another province.⁶⁴ In these cases, the provisional parliament shall submit the case, with its own recommendations, to the emperor.⁶⁵ As one half of the members of the national body are chosen from the provincial assemblies, the latter may expect in the former a large degree of sympathy for their cases against provincial authorities.

The first annual session of the provincial assemblies (except that of Sinkiang⁶⁶) has just closed. Their conduct has been differently criticised by observers. Dr. Morrison, the Peking correspondent of the *London Times*, has noted their common want of sympathy for the difficulties of the central government, and their excessive chauvinism. He describes the spirit of the assemblies as "iconoclastic, patriotic—in the sense that it denounces everything foreign—but lacking, so far, in intelligent leadership and constructive policy." He already observes "the coming chaos," "the first whispering of the approaching storm" between the radical provincials and, as he thinks, the insincere and incapable central authorities.⁶⁷ The impressions gathered by some Japanese observers are, however, by no means so pessimistic.⁶⁸ In many a province, the preparation for the session had been planned with much care and zeal, and the double election passed off with relatively little corruption and in remarkably good order. The elected members seem mostly to consist of gentry highly regarded in their respective provinces, with some men of educational and mercantile occupations, as well as rather small numbers of young men of modern education. When the session was about to begin, the regent and the governors issued edicts and orders counseling to all persons concerned public-

⁶³, ⁶⁴, ⁶⁵ These provisions also are not found in the Japanese law.

Altogether the Chinese law of the provincial assembly is several degrees more liberal than the Japanese law of the city and prefectural assemblies.

⁶⁶ It was decided to postpone until 1912 the opening of the assembly of this distant province, where the ethnic elements are heterogeneous, education is meagre and qualified voters are relative few. *Tō-A*, etc., July, 1909, p. 33.

⁶⁷ The *London Times*, November 23, 1909.

⁶⁸ *Tō-A*, etc., April, 1909, pp. 57-59; May, pp. 31-38; November, pp. 36-46 65-67; January 15, 1910, pp. 1-9, January 30, pp. 1-12; *Koku-min shin-bun* for December, 16; *Man-shu nichì-nichì shin-bun* for November 18.

spiritedness and good behavior, and the assemblies opened in the twenty-one provinces, on October 14, under favorable auspices. The subjects for discussion comprised, besides the bills submitted by the governors, a large variety of topics relating to provincial affairs. In some assemblies, a general lack of interest seemed to characterize the majority of the members, while in others trifling matters regarding the etiquette between the assembly and the governor led to heated debates. Important resolutions were passed by some assemblies, including that of Chī-li to establish a large spinning mill, that of Kiang-su to institute a general movement of all the provincial assemblies for the convocation of the national diet before 1917,⁶⁹ and that of Shan-tung to act in concert with all the other provincial assemblies regarding important questions.⁷⁰ The general oratorical powers of such members as took part in the debates were highly appraised by Japanese observers. It does not appear that the present session has seen much bitterness in the relation between the assemblies and the provincial and central authorities. It is true that fifteen assemblies passed resolutions denouncing the new stamp-tax, and that the assembly of Hu-pe very nearly expressed a decided opposition to the building of the Hankóu-Canton and Hankóu-Szīch'uan railways by a foreign loan.⁷¹ It is however, perhaps inevitable that future sessions will be very different from the present, for the provincial budgets, which will be discussed in the assemblies only after 1910-1911, are apt to become the great bone of contention between the people and the authorities, and to lead to acrimonious controversies in the assemblies. The latter's right of appeal and impeachment might then find a frequent application. Granting that may be the case, however, it does not follow that therefore the future of the assemblies is doubtful. One may turn to the experience of the Japanese imperial diet in the first years

⁶⁹ *Tō-A*, etc., January 15, 1910, p. 49, February 15, pp. 21-26. These enthusiasts would have the diet convened in a couple of years, but their first petition of January 16 was met by a courteous but firm declination by the regent to shorten the period of preparation.

⁷⁰ These questions were: the appointment and transfer of the viceroy or governor; international questions of railways and mines; copper currency; and public and private schools of law and politics. *Ibid.*, December, 1909, p. 54.

⁷¹ Finding that the provincial assembly had no right to discuss diplomatic questions, the matter of the railway loan was discussed no further, but was taken up as the sole subject of discussion by the specially organized railway council. *Koku-min shin-bun* for December 25, 1909; *Tō-A*, etc., January 15, 1910, pp. 25-28.

of its existence, in which the lack of training and the youthful enthusiasm of the newly elected members drove many of them to assume an extremely radical and chauvinistic attitude. This state of things did not outlive the great events that have since befallen the nation and have deepened the mind of the diet. It is likely that the Chinese assemblies will go through a similar stage of political experience. Whether the dangers arising from it will prove overwhelming must depend upon the future course of events in China and the degree of enlightened patriotism with which her government and people will meet them.

The law concerning the provisional parliament called *Tzì-chōng yüan*, which will be first convened in 1910, was promulgated on September 21, 1909,⁷² and the law of its election, on October 26 of the same year. This uni-cameral body is designed to prepare the way for the institution of the national diet in two houses. The provisional parliament will consist of two hundred members, a half of which number will be appointed by the emperor from among titled members of the imperial family, the hereditary nobles, and the tributary chiefs of the dependencies, and from among those elected and recommended by their peers⁷³ in the following four classes: the untitled members of the imperial family, officials of the central government between the fourth and seventh rank and learned scholars and wealthy gentry of the empire. The other hundred members will be selected by the governors from among twice as many men elected by the provincial assemblies from among their own members. The provisional parliament will discuss all the financial matters of the empire, all the new laws (excepting the constitution and the laws of the imperial household)

⁷² This superseded the tentative plan published on July 22, 1908.

⁷³ The learned scholars are, however, selected in the first instance, not by the their own class, but by high officials of the central and provincial government and by ministers accredited to foreign countries. The number of the members representing each of the seven classes that return the hundred members, and the number of men recommended to the throne for its final selection by each of the last four of these classes, are as follows: (1) Titled members of the imperial family—16 out of the whole class; (2) hereditary nobles—12 out of the whole class; (3) chiefs of the dependencies—14 out of the whole class; (4) Untitled members of the imperial family—6 out of the 60 recommended; (5) government scholars—32 out of the 160 recommended; (6) learned scholars—10 out of the 30 recommended; (7) wealthy gentry—10 out of the men elected by their peers in the provinces, no province allowing more than twenty wealthy men to take part in the election, and each province electing one-tenth of the number of its qualified wealthy voters.

and new changes in old laws, and such other matters as are referred to its deliberation. On specific grounds defined in the law,⁷⁴ the provisional parliament may be suspended or dissolved by imperial order. The parliament may consider direct petitions from the people and make them subjects for discussion. The parliament may put questions to a provincial assembly regarding provincial affairs. It also should submit to imperial decision all disputes between a provincial assembly and another or between the assembly and governor of the province, as well as an impeachment of the governor by the assembly. As regards the relation between the provisional parliament and the central government at Peking, it is provided that if the parliament and the chief of a board or a grand councillor should disagree, the case should be referred to the throne; likewise, the parliament may refer to the emperor, with the concurrence of more than two thirds of its members, an arbitrary act of a high official committed in violation of law or in disregard of the rights of the assembly.

These last provisions give the representative assemblies of all grades in China a unique feature which finds no exact parallel in the Japanese system. They may perhaps be regarded as a new application of the old Chinese principle of official censorship, which in its turn was derived from the ancient doctrine that the loss of virtue should cause the loss of political power. Apparently liberal and democratic, these provisions are further significant, when they are considered in relation with the absence in the Chinese government, already alluded to, of premiership and a cabinet system. From the most interesting historic development peculiar to China, all her high officials of state, as well as provincial governors, stand individually and separately in direct relation with the emperor. A reference to the throne of all cases of differences between the parliament and any chief executive official would therefore be a necessary course of action. At the same time this provision would signify a large increment of the already enormous theoretical powers of the throne, for it creates another powerful system of machinery under a direct control of the emperor. To him will the provisional parliament refer, not only its differences with high officials, but also all the appeals that come from the provisional assemblies regarding disputes among themselves or between them and

⁷⁴ Reasons for suspension and dissolution are similar to those that are stated in the law for the provincial assembly. A suspension should not exceed fifteen days.

governors. Add to this the large appointive power of the throne—whatever that may mean in practice—over a half of the members of the provisional parliament. From these considerations, one is compelled to ask if, behind these measures, may not be discerned the solicitous care of the throne, if possible, to increase and perpetuate its powers, in spite of, perhaps even by means of, the new régime, and thus to forestall the recurrence of those dynastic revolutions which have allowed no reigning house since the fall of Chòu to retain the sceptre undisputed for more than three centuries. Such a motive would be natural on the part of the imperial house, which is the theoretical originator and grantor of the constitution. Such, also, has been the case with the Japanese emperor and his constitution; and it is from the articles and the actual operation of the latter that the Chinese throne has derived the largest measure of inspiration in framing its constitution. China has availed herself of the clear expression of the imperial sovereignty in the Japanese constitution, but she goes farther than Japan, as she establishes a definite, direct relation between the throne and the provincial and national assemblies. And it is fair to surmise that that relation will become real and eventful, as soon as the assemblies begin to discuss the budgets, and, in their conflict with the authorities, have frequent recourse to their liberally bestowed right of appeal and impeachment. It will be observed with keen interest whether future laws will preserve the significant provisions to which reference has been made, and, if so, whether the throne of China would not find itself in relation with the actual politics of the nation at too many points of contact to be conducive to its tranquility.⁷⁵

A closer examination of the preparatory measures would seem to indicate another unexpressed but important purpose of their promulgation: namely, a larger centralization than has obtained hitherto

⁷⁵ Mr. Ta Shòu, in his able report on his studies of the political institutions of Japan, whither he was sent as an investigating commissioner, advocates the well-known theory of the late Prince Ito, himself the framer and commentator of the Japanese constitution, that the system of combining all sovereignty in the hands of the emperor and yet conducting the actual business of government through regular constitutional organs would at once relieve the emperor from the direct responsibility of government, and obviate the danger of the dynastic revolution. *Tō-A*, etc., October, 1908, pp. 32-33. The existing system in China, when a constitution is grafted on it, will be found to fall far short of this ideal state of an "indirect government."

of political powers at Peking. For highly interesting historical reasons, upon which we have no time to enlarge, the provincial governor has been allowed to wield large financial, military, and diplomatic powers. While this condition has in the past largely contributed to the comparative peace and prosperity of some provinces, it would, under the new régime, have proved a great impediment to national unity and strength, had it been allowed to persist. The new measures, some of which have been summarized in this paper, compel the provincial government to render its annual financial accounts and its monthly reports of all important affairs to the central government. Provincial banks will be under the supervision of the central Board of Finance, which will also appoint two auditors for each province to oversee the reorganization of its finances. No loan contract and no agreement of any kind will henceforth be concluded by the province with a foreign power without the sanction of the boards of finance and of foreign affairs.⁷⁶ The military and police forces will also eventually come under the control of the central government in one form or another. It is an important question whether the provinces, which will continue to bear the bulk of the increasing financial burden of the new measures, will meekly acquiesce in a gradual loss of power, and whether the imppecunious central government will be able to make a sustained struggle and carry it to a successful issue. Still more important will be the question as to the effect of the decrease, if any, of the political powers of the province upon its future welfare.

Finally, one may note that, from the historical standpoint, the new régime involves a departure from the old which is more radical than any that has been discussed, that is, the limited participation granted to the people at large in the conduct of provincial and national affairs as distinguished from the local. It is true that the old political philosophy of China taught that Heaven appointed the most virtuous man to govern and instruct the people, and that when a prince lost virtue and lost popular esteem, he forfeited his political power. But, even in this ideal theory, the people were an object of paternal care by the sovereign, and not critics and participants of government. Now, for the first time in Chinese history, circumstances have forced the unwilling ruler to decree that henceforth, while sovereignty is still vested in the emperor, "all affairs of government shall be decided by public opinion." Whatever the immediate practical effect of the ré-

⁷⁶ *Tō-A.*, etc., January 15, 1910, pp. 22, 50.

gime, the solvent idea of popular participation in government appears to have taken root in the Chinese mind. In the mutual reactions between this idea and the tendency toward centralization and the movement to secure the imperial power, are likely to be enacted some of the most interesting political phenomena of the twentieth century.